

**Middletown School Readiness Council**  
**12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.**  
**Wednesday, March 16, 2016**  
**Wilbert Snow School**  
**299 Wadsworth St.**  
**Middletown, CT 06457**

**Members Present:** Alice Torres, Jessica Stewart, Sheila Daniels, Monica Belyea, Wendy Berlind, Kitty Robinson, Amy Waterman, Beverly Lawrence, Susan Sienkiewicz, Jennifer Cannata, Donna Marino, Izzi Greenberg, and Pat Charles. Also present: Past chair and new interim co-chair, Betsy Morgan.

**I. Welcome & Call to Order:** Alice Torres opened the meeting at 12:13P.M. welcoming everyone present and noting the empty chair next to her in Ed Bonilla's absence. Ed has stepped down as co-chair, but will remain on the School Readiness Council. He was unable to make today's meeting due to work commitments. Alice welcomed past chair, Betsy Morgan, as the new interim co-chair. Introductions were made. Betsy noted she is happy to be back at the table and is currently continuing her work at Odd Fellows.

**II. Acceptance of the February 17, 2016 School Readiness Council meeting minutes:** Donna Marino moved to accept the minutes from the above mentioned date. Amy Waterman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**III. Middletown Early Childhood Plan:** Alice began this discussion by informing the Council that she and Jessica met and discussed the PowerPoint Jessica created for the Council's review. The premise of this exercise was to revisit the goals, objectives, reassess and in the future revise. She and Jessica led the Council through the PowerPoint. Edits and material additions were made and items to look into and delve further into were noted. Alice will follow up on issues brought forth and she will then confer with Betsy, update Jessica and share with the Council. All in all, entities within the Early Childhood Council are working well and a reiteration of work to date (since the last report in 2009 and assessment in 2012) would be a good idea.

**IV. Coordinator's Report:**

**Financial and Monthly Summary Report:** Jessica circulated the current report noting every program is full, programs currently have waiting lists and the Y's program at Macdonough School is already full for the next school year. While discussing capacity in the City, CRT's Head Start program enrollment was brought to the attention of the Council and it was reported their numbers are down from 120 in 14-15 to 77 children currently enrolled. They have converted all their slots to full-day/full-year from part-day/school-year. This change in enrollment could be contributing to enrollment in other programs going up and waiting lists growing.

**Updates:**

**Local Early Childhood Council Advocacy Day, April 13<sup>th</sup>:** Jessica reminded the Council of this event. Efforts are being made to include all of the Early Childhood Councils throughout CT. She noted Betsy will act as the official greeter and welcome everyone to the event, which will

include a panel discussion on the importance of these councils and supports for issues around early childhood care and education, including budget concerns. LECC's will then have the opportunity to set up meetings with their local legislators. Jessica stated she is looking for members to attend as they are trying to fill the room which holds 150 people.

**Budget Concerns:** Further discussion around the state budget took place. Amy Waterman will be authoring a letter outlining the importance of each program as part of an overall system of support to children and families.

**Complete Streets Update:** Monica reported from this city committee that a new ordinance proposed will include preschools being consulted prior to work occurring in front of their programs. New work proposals do include areas around some schools and preschools.

**Breastfeeding Support:** Employer outreach continues on this important issue for working mothers. Please bring to Monica's attention any company that is interested in supporting the cause. She noted it is always better coming directly from a company rather than her support group.

**PreK-K Committee Update:** The committee has created a form to be used for sharing DIAL 4 information with the preschool programs the children are currently enrolled in. Children falling below a score of 60 on the DIAL4 test will have a form completed and it will be shared with the School Readiness office for distribution to the preschool programs the child attends, and to make referrals for children without any preschool, or with no summer preschool programming to the Kindergarten KickStart program. Amy will continue to be the liaison between the school district and the Kick Start director.

**V. Adjournment:** Monica Belyea moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:30P.M. Amy Waterman seconded. The motion carried. Alice closed the meeting thanking those present for their attendance.

**The next Middletown School Readiness Council meeting will be held on**  
**Wednesday, April 27th, 2016**  
*(Please note this date is the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, not the 3<sup>rd</sup>, due to the school district spring break)*  
**at**  
**Wilbert Snow School**  
**299 Wadsworth St., Middletown, CT 06457**  
**from**  
**12:00 P.M. to 1:30 P.M.**

**Respectfully Submitted by:**  
Sheila C. Daniels